WHAT IMPACT DOES SCAFFOLDING HAVE ON LEVEL-1 STUDENTS LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE?

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Abstract

Teaching English Language Learners (ELLs) can represent a challenge for any educator, even those with vast teaching experience. Adequate support, to make sure they can successfully access the content knowledge as they acquire the target language becomes essential during the planning and delivery stages especially for level 1 ELLs. For this to be done successfully, teachers must not only be cognizant of what their students need but also have a clear idea of how to teach them. In this sense, scaffolding of all learning activities may have a huge impact on the outcome. This workshop presents a lesson plan geared towards Kindergarten and first grade classroom teachers who work with level 1 ELLs. It has been designed to demonstrate the instructional delivery of a lesson plan with different scaffolds for Level 1 ELLs as they also learn the content knowledge. Teachers will participate as students so that they can use and experience the different scaffolds provided to facilitate the learning process. The ultimate goal of this workshop is to provide teachers with scaffolding strategies that they can later incorporate in their daily practice when planning and delivering their lessons for English Language learners.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this accomplishment to my parents and partner, who contributed to making this dream come true. To my mother, Fanny Aguilar, who always taught me to work hard for my dreams, and whose prayers have kept me safe while being away from home. To my dad, Fernando Romero, who always believed in me and encouraged me to continue studying and who always showed me his unconditional love and gave me the necessary strength to pursue my goals. To my boyfriend William who gave me strength and encouragement and was always there for me when I felt I was not going to be able to finish it. To Ernesto, whose unconditional love and support helped me go through this process. I dedicate this to all of you.

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Chapter One: Introduction

As an English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) teacher, I have spent many years looking for appropriate methods and strategies that can work with English language learners (ELLs). Teaching ELLs can represent a challenge for any educator, even for the ones who have a lot of experience in this area. When faced with these challenges, student do not always show the learning results that we expect. Often, it takes more time than we hope because the acquisition of a second language (L2) is not something that occurs immediately. Sometimes we forget that acquiring another language is a complex process that takes years with multiple stages (Krashen, 1988). As an ESL/EFL teacher, I have always been concerned about techniques that would benefit English learners with basic or no language skills, that is to say ELLs level 1.

Since I started teaching ELLs in this country, I have seen how they struggle to make progress in the acquisition of the L2, especially in the learning of content areas. For level 1 students it is hard to comprehend the content knowledge, as well as be able to understand what it is said in the classroom, since their English skills are not developed yet.

For the classroom teachers who work with them on a daily basis in different subject areas, the situation is not good either since they want to help the English learners, but many times they do not know the strategies to work with level 1 English Learners. The activities and the support given to level 1learners are essential elements when planning, but mostly when delivering lessons, since it is in this moment that ELLs need the correct supports, or scaffolds, to

understand the content knowledge and acquire the target language. Unfortunately, these ingredients are not always added. Many teachers do not include them because they do not know the process or the stages of acquiring an L2, nor do they know the strategies for scaffolding the learning activities to address teaching level 1 English Learners. It becomes of huge importance that teachers are responsive and aware of what their students need to learn, especially when they are teaching English learners with different language levels.

Considering this situation, it is key to provide level 1 ELL students with a wide variety of strategies and scaffolded activities, which help them acquire their L2 while learning content knowledge, too (Echeverria, Vogt & Short, 2008). For this reason, the use of different scaffolds when delivering a lesson can make an important impact in an ESL classroom.

Being an ESL teacher who has worked in an elementary school in the classroom setting as a co-teacher and in small group instruction, I have observed many times the lack of strategies and scaffolds needed to teach level 1 ELL students. Moreover, I realized how frustrated and disappointed were not only the English learners, but also the teachers who could not fulfill students' needs by providing students a low-anxiety environment with the proper input to make the lessons comprehensible through the use of scaffolds. Therefore, I observed there is an important gap that needs to be closed by teachers when delivering a lesson. They should include the use of scaffolds for each activity presented to ELL level 1 in order to help them reach their goals.

Taking this scenario into account, this project is a workshop with a focus on a lesson plan, with different scaffolds for ELLs level 1. Teachers participate as students and experience using diverse scaffolds to facilitate their learning process. This workshop is geared towards classroom teachers who work with level 1 ESL students to facilitate their instructional delivery

during different blocks of work, such as Language Arts, Math, Science, or other subjects. The idea is that teachers use the different strategies presented in this workshop when planning and delivering their lessons. The workshop will be conducted at Ellis Elementary School, Prince William County Schools in Manassas, Virginia. It is a one-hour session, and it will take place during a staff meeting. The main objective in this session is to provide teachers with strategies/ scaffolds to help level 1 ELLs to acquire L2 as well as learn the content knowledge.

I believe that having the knowledge of how a second language is acquired, knowing what students' needs are, and being able to use the correct scaffolds when needed, are the most important elements for helping ELLs to succeed in reaching their academic goals. Scaffolding can make a huge difference for second language learners and when implemented properly it will surely help students get to where they need to be as part of any new society in which they are immersed. My personal goal is to provide teachers with useful tools and good teaching practices that promote ells' learning process successfully.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The process of learning a second language has been studied throughout the years by linguists, educators, and academics in order to identify effective ways to support learners in the acquisition of non-native languages and content knowledge. Learning a second language is a complex process that can be seen in several ways, depending on different factors such as personal experience, individuals' skills for learning languages, interference of mother tongue (L1), self- efficacy, and motivation (Adwani & Shrivastava, 2017).

In this chapter, I will explore these processes in-depth and examine appropriate strategies and scaffolds for making content knowledge and the acquisition of English accessible for English Language Learners (ELL). Next, I will provide the definition of scaffold in the English as a Second Language (ESL) context that most states and school divisions have adopted to outline the ELLS program. Also, I will briefly refer to World- Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), its English Language Proficiency Levels and how they operate in the United States. Then, I will explain how the different English Levels work in a classroom setting. Finally, I will describe different types of scaffolding which can be used with different levels of English learners, focusing on ones that are especially useful with Level 1 English learners.

Theories of Second Language Learning

A great variety of theories regarding second language acquisition and learning have been proposed in the past and are still being proposed in the present time. All of them try to explain

how language is acquired. One important theory to mention is Chomsky's (1960) theory of language acquisition, mostly related to first language acquisition, which was later foundational as a pillar for other language acquisition theories such as Krashen's theory. Chomsky states that human beings are born with a special- innate capacity to learn a language when which he compared to a computer processor stating that the human brain's processing capabilities are already prepared to receive external information (input) and learn the correct grammatical rules of that language (Chomsky, 1960). According to him, the only plausible explanation for acquiring the first language so efficiently is due to this innate skill that we are born with; it is a capacity comparable to how a child learns to walk (Chomsky, 1960).

Another relevant theory that follows Chomsky's ideas is Krashen's language acquisition theory, which claims that the acquisition of a second language (L2) is a mental and personal process in which learners do not necessarily need to write or speak to learn the target language. In other words, it supports the idea that acquisition of the L2 is a similar process to the way we learn our first language. Second language acquisition is unconscious, and the acquirer is not aware of it, language is used for communication purposes (Krashen, 1987). He developed his theory basically in 5 hypotheses: Natural Order hypothesis, Acquisition/learning hypothesis, Monitor hypothesis, Input hypothesis, and Affective Filter hypothesis. Two of these central hypotheses will be discussed in this chapter. They are Krashen's Input Hypothesis and his Affective Filter Hypothesis. An understanding of each can be very helpful in understanding the process of L2 acquisition and helpful for teachers to focus their teaching practices promoting students' learning.

In terms of acquisition and according to Krashen, it is fundamental to make the message comprehensible for students. His theory states that language learners progress in the acquisition

of L2, whether in oral or written form, when they receive messages that they understand or in other words, when they receive comprehensible input (Krashen, 1988). L2 learners acquire the language best when the "input' is comprehensible for them, when they understand what people tell them, as opposed to how people say it (Krashen, 1988). In order for that language acquisition to occur, this comprehensible input needs to be one step beyond their current linguistic Competence level. For example, if a learner is at "i" level (i= input), he/she should be exposed to "i +1 (input + one), for acquisition to take place (Krashen, 1988). Krashen also states that, on the contrary, if the input is "i+10", it is too hard for the learner to understand because it is an input which is too far from the learner's current linguistic competence; consequently, acquisition cannot take place in this situation either (Krashen, 1988). This is an important issue to remain cognizant of in order to help ELLs in their gradual acquisition of the new language. Also, considering that, according to Krashen, acquiring a language is a natural thing, babies and young children acquire their native language in an easy way, at home, without any formal teaching context (Krashen, 1987), and this is what teachers should aim to do in their classrooms.

The other hypothesis important to mention from Krashen's theory of language acquisition is the *affective filter hypothesis (*Krashen, 1987*)*. Affective factors like stress, boredom, embarrassment, and anxiety can block the comprehensible input (Krashen, 1987). This important consideration has also been stated in the model standards for adult education programs, which states that to promote the development of language fluency and self-esteem in second language learners, it is necessary for teachers to provide a learning environment that fosters low anxiety levels (The English as a Second Language Model Standards for Adult Education Program, 1992). Therefore, the role that this filter has in acquiring a second language is also of high importance because even if a teacher provides comprehensible input, acquisition may not take

place when a student feels anxious, nervous, and uncomfortable expressing opinions and speaking in class. When the emotional filter is high, part of the role of the teacher is to lower the learners' affective filter in order to provide them with a classroom environment that promotes safety and allows students to make mistakes when learning a language. When this filter is high, the input cannot reach the parts of the brain where acquisition occurs. Basically, what Krashen has stated in these two hypotheses is the importance of teachers being able to provide students with comprehensible input (correct scaffolds) in a risk- free environment, where the affective filter is low.

Environmental Theory

Another second language acquisition theory of relevance is the Environmentalist, which focuses on the individual's environment, the individual's social relationships and the types of communication that emerge from that environment (Bandura & Walters, 1977). What this theory claims is that a child's environment shapes learning and behavior. It posits that people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modeling (Bandura& Walters, 1977). A significant theory encompassed in this environmentalist approach is Acculturation theory, which postulates that learning a L2 can be a shocking experience for the learner of the target language, since being exposed and immersed in a different cultural group can be stressful and frightening (Schumann, 1978). This theory describes the process from the point of view of two different social groups that need to interact with each other; the learner and the culture, which he/she needs to interact and communicate (Schumann, 1978). More succinctly, Acculturation theory is the idea that being from a different culture than that of the target language has its own intrinsic

challenges for the language learner (Schumann, 1978). The more assimilation and acculturation in the L2, the more possibilities to succeed in learning it (Schumann, 1978).

According to other authors who have contributed to the acculturation theory, this is seen as the adaptation process through which a second language learner goes through when he/she encounters the new culture, which involves new ways to think and feel for the learner (Brown, 2000). Some researchers who have contributed to review this acculturation theory, proposed to change the term "acculturation" since in it underlies the idea of rivalry between the home culture (immigrant, learners' culture) and the dominant (new culture, target culture). Also, it is believed that the term acculturation entails a loss of values and beliefs of the home culture. Acculturation can be changed for a less aggressive term such as transculturation, integration, intercultural, interdependence, or multiculturalism.

Nativization theory

Another essential theory, the Nativization theory, proposed by Anderson (1981) used a fundamental pillar of Schumann's theory but introduced a cognitive dimension. The Nativization theory was more concerned with learning and saw the acquisition of a second language as a process pre- determined by two aspects, Nativization and Denativization. The main characteristic of Nativization is that the learner seeks to assimilate and incorporate the input he/she receives from the target culture to the home language. The learner does not change his/her home culture beliefs or behaviors (internal norms) but incorporates/ assimilates them in the L2.

On the contrary Denativization, is the process through which a person feels detached and loses some of his/her own home culture beliefs and behaviors. The learner reshapes his/her inter language to be in accordance with the input that he/she receives from the L2, and by doing this

he/she is adapting or suiting to the external norm and the culture target group. In addition, it involves accommodation to the second culture and often involved a person's change in his/her beliefs (Andersen, 1981). In order for this to happen, the learner needs to adjust his/her thoughts and conduct to the culture group in which he/she has become immersed. Hence, he/she feels more connected to the linguistic forms of the target group (L2) with no interference of L1 (Andersen, 1981).

The last but not least learning/ acquisition theory that I will mention is the Accommodation theory, which according to Giles describes how people adjust their language patterns to those of others (Giles, 2016). That is to say, the emphasis in this theory is in the way individuals see themselves in relation to their home culture and foreign culture (L1 and L2), and in order to avoid communication failure and misunderstandings, they accommodate their language to the one of their communication partner (Giles, 2016).

Factors that Influence Second Language Learning

The acquisition of a L2 is a phenomenon, which involves a wide variety of different aspects that take place in a concrete situation; that is to say in a specific social and linguistic context. In this context, the central element is the learner; so the better teachers know the learner and the factors that intervene and limit the learning process, the better teachers will be able to guide and provide the learner with the best learning strategies. In this chapter I will focus on the ones that are more relevant to ELLs at beginning level.

First Language Interference

Studies have shown that there are many factors that influence second language learning such as intelligence, attitude, aptitude, age, cognitive style, motivation and personality (Ellis, 1989). Research has also shown that the influence of the first language into the second language can be positive or negative; this is called “language transfer, or language interference” (Lado, 1957).

Languages have different systems, although some languages are related to one another, or have the same root; for example Spanish and Italian are both Romance languages. When the structure of the languages is the same, linguistic interference results in a positive way, in the correct use of the L2, and it is called “positive” interference. An example could be cognates. However, when the languages come from different roots and has a different language structure, the learner is predisposed to commit errors in the production of the L2 based on their L1. That is known as “negative interference” since the learner transfers items and structures that are different in both languages (Lado, 1957).

Motivation

Motivation is considered as one of the most important factors in the acquisition of a L2. Some researchers have defined it as a factor that determines a person’s desire to do something (Richards, Platt, Weber& Inman, 1986). It is evident that a learner who wants to learn is likely to achieve more than a learner who does not want to learn. Students, who enjoy language learning and feel proud of their progress, will do much better than those who do not.

Attitude

Some authors have stated that language attitude is the attitude which speakers of other languages have towards other's languages or to their own language. When a learner expresses positive or negative feelings toward a language, this may be reflecting the difficult or ease of learning the L2, degrees of importance of the L2, social status of the L2, etc. (Richards, Platt, Weber & Inman, 1986). Some personality types and general interest in learning foreign languages can be a positive or negative influence.

Age

Age is one important factor that affects second language learning. Studies in naturalistic learning setting state that children are better at second language learning than adults. They seem to be in their best stage (age) to acquire a new language efficiently. Older learners who are motivated can be successful too, but they usually struggle to achieve a native- speaker pronunciation and intonation (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Aptitude

Aptitude refers to a specific ability a learner has for learning a second language (Ellis, 1989). According to Richards, Platt, Weber & Inman (1986), aptitude is the natural ability to learn a language. Also, they state that language aptitude is a combination of different abilities or skills, such as identification of sound pattern in a language, recognition of the different grammatical functions of words in a sentence, etc. Learners need this "aptitude "to be able to learn/ acquire a L2.

Learning Styles

It is also called cognitive style. This is the specific way in which a learner tries to learn something. It is believed that if teachers match their teaching strategies to the learners' learning styles, the students will be more likely to succeed and in consequence be more interested in learning the second language. Different learners may have different learning styles, some will prefer explanations of grammar rules of the L2 (audio learners), some may prefer to write down words or sentences that help them to remember (kinesthetic learners), and others may feel they remember things better if they are associated to visual aids, like pictures, realia, etc. (visual learners) (Richards, Platt, Weber & Inman, 1986).

Personality

Studies believe that learners bring to the classroom not only their cognitive skills, but also affective, emotional states, which can influence the way learners, perceive and acquire the L2. These states can be beneficial for the learners or not. According to Ellis, the most important personality factors in learning a L2 are: introversion, extroversion, self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, anxiety and empathy (Ellis, 1989).

Anxiety

This is a considerable aspect of learning a L2, which should be taken into account when teaching ELLs. Anxiety can be defined as the state of mind of a person that involves feelings of discomfort or agitation, frustration, insecurity and worry (Brown, 2000). Some people may have general predisposition to feel anxious and others may feel the state of anxiety under a particular situation. In the second language learning context, there are some clearly identified components

for anxiety to take place. They occur when communicating in L2, as fear of negative social evaluation as a result of test anxiety. Also, it's believed that the relationship between the teacher and the student can cause anxiety, too.

ESL newcomers or Level 1 Students: Who are they?

ELLs face numerous challenges as they adjust to a new language, a new culture and a new school system. A great number of ELLs present difficulty in adapting to the new world, many times so different to their home country. Most ELLs are children of immigrant parents, visiting professionals, or international students, and although some of these children are literate in their first language or arrive to the country as a level 2 English learner, or with the basic communicative English skills, and have had formal school experience in their countries, others have not had this previous school experience, or any literacy in their L1(Clegg, 1996). Many times this makes the acquisition/ learning of the second language more difficult and stressful. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the term "newcomers" refers to "any foreign-born students and their families who have recently arrived in the United States" (U.S Department of Education, 2016, p. 8).For the World- Class Instruction Design and Assessment (WIDA) newcomers are assessed in English and then often categorized as Level 1 students, or entering students in learning the L2, if they do not understand or speak the target language (English) with exception of some isolated words, or expressions.

The culture shock they suffer when faced with this new world, the expectations they need to meet, the social interactions they must navigate which are often limited, and the pressure for reaching academic and language goals make them feel frustrated and isolated. The installation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) proved to be somewhat beneficial for low performing students

and/ or English learners, since it allowed the states flexibility when choosing instructional programs for these students. With the end of NCLB, there is still a lot to do for these students under Every Students Succeeds Act in terms of the support they daily need in the school setting. In consequence, it becomes necessary that teachers and the school community that work with level 1 ELLs are aware of who they are, where they come from and what learning stage they are, so they can provide them with the right scaffolds to acquire the target language as well as the content knowledge to succeed in the academic and social areas.

World Class Instruction Design and Assessment (WIDA)

WIDA Educational Consortium is made up of 40 states. Among its main goals are to design and implement proficiency standards and assessment for K-12 English language learners. It also provides professional development to teachers and conducts research on professional practices that promote language learning as well as the results and use of assessments. According to WIDA's assessment, there are six proficiency English levels, which start with Level 1 or Entering, Level 2 or Emerging, Level 3 or Developing, Level 4 or Expanding, Level 5 or Bridging and Level 6 or Reaching (WIDA handbook, 2012). It is important to mention that WIDA uses the term newcomers synonymously with Level 1 English learners. All the states that are part of the WIDA Consortium assess their ELLs using one of three primary assessments, the WIDA ACCESS, WAPT, Model as well as others. When the results are available, teachers better understand what level of English proficiency students have and they can organize them into different service delivery models. These may include such options as, small groups for more personalized instruction within the classroom (push in), or various others such as co- taught model, classes with only EL students of varying English levels, or additionally, teachers can

work with students in a one- on- one separate location setting, or a small group instruction outside the mainstream classroom (pull out). Most typically in my experience level 1 English learners, or newcomers with none or very basic English proficiency work with an ESL teacher in a one on one setting, since their understanding of the L2 is quite basic.

Scaffolding Theory

What does the term scaffolding mean? The term scaffolding was introduced by Woods, Bruner and Ross (1976) based on the Russian psychologist Vygotsky's (1978) concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is closely connected to what will later be called scaffolding theory. Vygotsky defined ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). His idea of ZPD is key to understand where scaffolding comes from and the importance it has for ELLs.

What Vygotsky basically points out is that there is a difference between what a learner can do by himself, without any help and what a learner can do with guidance and support of a more skilled partner or teacher's guidance (Vygotsky, 1980). Bruner, the same as Vygotsky, emphasized the idea of the social nature of learning, stating the relevant role that others have in helping the learner to develop the necessary skills to achieve a given task, through the process of scaffolding. He claims "scaffolding refers to the steps taken to reduce the degrees of freedom in carrying out some task so that the child can concentrate on the difficult skill she/he is in the process of acquiring" (Bruner, 1978, p.19).Other authors have stated, "scaffolding refers to providing contextual supports for meaning through the use of simplified language, teacher

modeling, visuals and graphics, cooperative learning and hands on learning" (Ovando, Collier & Combs, 2003, p. 345t).

As it has been discussed previously, the term scaffolding is connected to the provision of appropriate assistance to students in order to help them to achieve what by themselves may be difficult to achieve. This provision of assistance is supplied by teachers, or a more knowledgeable peer (Vygotsky,1980). The benefits of the use of scaffolds are various. Scaffolds help learners to build prior knowledge and internalize new input. The goal of the teacher when using this teaching strategy is to help the student to become an independent learner and problem solver, ready to be part of the society. In addition to facilitating learning, scaffolds motivate the learner to be focused on the task and achieve the goal; they simplify the task to a more manageable level and reduce the levels of frustration and risk. Also, scaffolds help in clarifying the expectations of the activities (Echeverria, Vogt & Short, 2008; Gibbons, 2015).

Types of Scaffolds

Scaffolding is the main focus of action 12 in "Essential Actions: A Handbook for Implementing WIDA's Framework for English Language Development Standards" (Gottlieb, 2013). It has been categorized in three groups: sensory, graphic and interactive. Scaffolding can be included during a lesson or during an assessment. Some important scaffolds, to make content comprehensible for English learners are proposed, these are; verbal, procedural and instructional scaffolding (Echeverria, Vogt & Short, 2008).

Verbal Scaffolding

It consists of the use of paraphrasing, think-alouds, correct pronunciation, and the eliciting of more language and information from students. This scaffold intends to facilitate the student's movement to higher levels of thinking, comprehension, and language proficiency (Echeverria, Vogt & Short, 2008).

Procedural Scaffolding

It supports the learning process but eventually leads to independent work. Some examples are: explicit teaching, modeling, and partnering with more experienced students so they can feel more confident working with a peer and have more opportunities to interact and use the same language to make meaning possible (Echeverria, Vogt & Short, 2008).

Instructional Scaffolding

It helps learners to access content and language concepts. Examples of this type of scaffold are: graphic organizers, models of completed assignments, and sample products so learners can see what the expectations are. These three scaffolds are necessary to consider when planning a lesson, since ESL learners, will probably need support with the different activities presented in class so those activities can be meaningful and comprehensible for them (Echeverria, Vogt & Short, 2008).

Conclusion

When a teacher plans and exposes students to the correct methods, including strategies and the scaffolds mentioned above, that helps students acquire and comprehend content in the

second language, students are then able to engage in the class activities and extend their knowledge to real life situations. They also feel safe and confident participating in class which helps them learn what they need to learn in order to reach their learning goals. In our contemporary, global context, it is essential to provide students with real learning opportunities that they can meaningfully connect to their personal lives as well as the world that surrounds them. This important aspect leads teachers to consider setting objectives as a key to motivate learning, since the more the learners are involved in this process; the more they work for their objectives. By setting objectives with the students, teachers are giving them a clear direction for learning and empowering them to be responsible for their own learning process (Hill &Flynn, 2006). In this way, teachers can help students succeed, reach their goals and integrate into a new globalized world.

Literature in this chapter shows the importance of scaffolding in ELL instruction. There are many theories about the acquisition of a second language that relate one to another. These theories help teachers to understand and address learners' needs and helps them to consider the different language acquisition stages. However, what becomes especially relevant to be aware of, as a teacher, is that these theories along with the selection of the correct activities and resources needs to be accompanied by one of the key factors of learning a second language and making the input comprehensible. This key factor is the use of different scaffolds including, verbal, procedural, and instructional scaffolds to help learners of a L2 to achieve their goals in a comfortable and supportive environment.

Chapter Three: Project Design

In this chapter, I will explain the rationale behind the implementation of an educational workshop for teachers that aims to widen their understanding of teaching English Language Learners (ELL). The workshop intends to be a helpful resource for mainstream teachers mainly, to use it when planning and delivering their lessons. I will begin with a brief summary of the importance of scaffolding in English as a Second Language instruction (ESL). Then, I will provide the rationale behind the product I created for this purpose. Finally, I will present a general description of the workshop and the objectives I expect to accomplish with its implementation.

Relevance of Scaffolding in an ESL classroom

In the United States, the number of English learners in prekindergarten through grade 8 has increased over the years, with an increase of 3% between 2003 to 2016 from 39 million to 39.8 million. Researchers expect an increase of 2% more from 2016 to 2028, that is, approximately 40.5 million (Hussar & Bailey,2020). The projected numbers for enrollment in schools by race/ ethnicity from Fall 2016 to Fall 2028 indicate that Hispanic students will increase by 8% from 2016 to 2028; Asian Pacific Islanders will increase 20% from 2016 to 2028; and for students who belong to two or more races there will be an increase of 51% in the same period of time (Hussar & Bailey, 2020). In this scenario, it becomes necessary for teachers to provide ELL students with the appropriate strategies and activities to enhance and help these

learners to succeed in school.

ELL students can and will be successful if the teachers provide the necessary support and scaffolds to learn the target language and the content knowledge in an environment that provides the emotional support needed when learning a L2. It is common to hear mainstream teachers express their frustration when teaching ELLs, many times because they have not had teacher preparation programs that enable them to teach diverse populations of students effectively (Short et al., 2018).

Thus, the responsibility usually falls on ESOL teachers. Short et al. (2018) explain that "Many elementary grade- level and secondary content area teachers have not had all the preparation they need to teach English learners effectively" (p. 3). In order to help teachers integrate content and language development in their lessons, more and more districts offer professional development on how to scaffold ELLs effectively (Echeverria, et al., 2008). Scaffolding in the common way as people use it is a temporary structure, which is used in the process of construction or repairing a building. When each step of the new building is finished, the scaffolding is taken down. It is temporary, but it becomes a key part in the construction of the building and its success (Gibbons, 2015). In the classroom setting, scaffolding acts as "the temporary, but essential, nature of the mentor's assistance in supporting ELLS to carry out and succeed with the tasks presented" (Maybin, Mercer, and Stierer 1992 as cited in Gibbons, 2015, p. 186).

According to TESOL International Association more and more people learn English today for different reasons. Therefore, it is crucial that teachers make informed decisions about their instructional practices in the classroom (Short et al. , 2018). Without the knowledge of how a L2 is acquired and without the understanding of which scaffolds can be used according to the

ELLs' English levels, there are many missed opportunities for ELLs to acquire the target language and content knowledge.

Rationale

The literature review in chapter two showed the importance of the use of scaffolding when teaching ELLs. Learning an L2 requires that teachers of English learners understand that language development is dynamic and not always linear, it has different stages and these stages need to be considered for planning and teaching instruction (Shortet al. 2018). A Level 1 ELL is a student who is often a new arrival with little previous English training and very limited vocabulary, so scaffolding in this particular stage appears as a crucial support to make language and content comprehensible (Gibbons, 2015). Scaffolding is not just a synonym for help, but it is the type of help that will be essential in assisting learners to be able to move to new skills, concepts, and levels of comprehension (Gibbons, 2015). Gibbons defined it as:

> the temporary assistance by which a teacher helps a learner know how to do something, so that the learner will later be able to complete a similar task alone. It is future oriented and aimed at increasing a learner's autonomy. (p.16)

The number of English learners in schools requires that more teachers are fully prepared to teach a diverse population, including ELLs with different English levels, so that they can achieve language and academic goals, in a comfortable and stress-free environment at school.

Design

The product I designed will be a workshop intended to provide orientation for educators to develop a better understanding of how to scaffold English learners level 1. The workshop will

provide the school staff with a professional development which aims to provide teachers with useful types of scaffolds that can be used with ELLs level 1.

Professional Development for School Staff

Teachers are the ones who provide instruction to English learners, including different subjects such as, Math, Language Arts, Science, etc. They are a model of language proficiency for ELLs. They use the target language daily, incorporating the four language skills which are; listening, speaking, reading and writing (Short et al. 2018). It is crucial that teachers know their learners, create the conditions for language learning, design high quality lessons for language development, adapt the lesson delivery as it is needed and know the correct strategies and scaffolds to help learners in developing language and content (Short et al. 2018). This workshop will provide teachers with useful ways to scaffold English learners level 1.

Since ESL teachers usually work with ELLs often for short periods of time in a day, it becomes of vital importance that mainstream teachers know the students, and most importantly, know how to scaffold their learning. The workshop will consist of different hands-on activities presented in a level 1 ELL class of 45 minute. It will be conducted in a staff meeting in the morning. The workshop will specifically address scaffolding Level 1 English learners. The workshop will be a lesson plan with different scaffolds that can be used with Ell's level 1. Teachers will have the opportunity to participate in the class as students and practice these activities using different scaffolds for each activity presented. The workshop will include the use of visual aids, realia, cooperative groups, and use of the four language skills, which will promote active participation of the students and will allow teachers to have enough time to see how they can formatively assess the students' work in a real class setting.

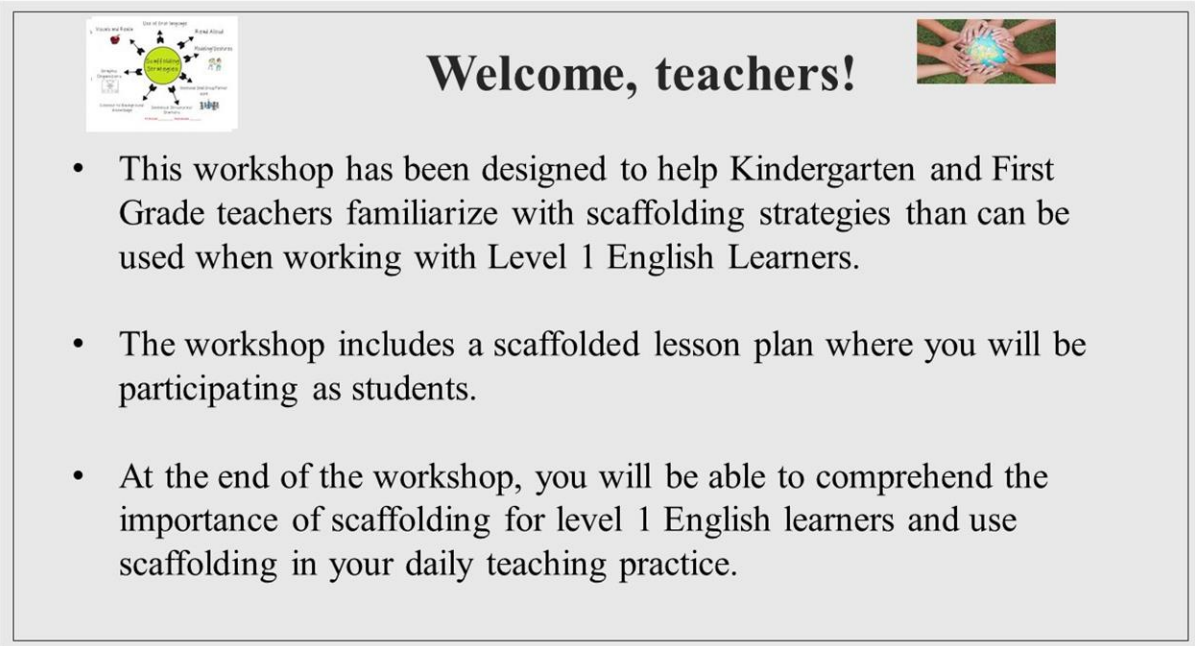
Chapter 4: Product

In this chapter, I will provide a step by step explanation of the workshop I created to assist teachers in using different scaffolds when teaching English learners. The expectation is to contribute to the teaching and learning process in a mainstream classroom with level 1 English learners. This workshop will be a lesson plan, which will have scaffolds for each activity presented in the class. Teachers will participate as students so they can have the opportunity to experience scaffolded learning. The 60-minute workshop will be presented to teachers in one session.

Teacher workshop: Lesson outline and context of the lesson.

The workshop will be conducted at Ellis Elementary School, Manassas, in the state of Virginia. The lesson will take 46 minutes. The participants will be Kindergarten and first grade classroom teachers, consisting of ten teachers who have a large number of English learners in their classrooms. The students' English levels are one and two.

The lesson will be scaffolded by using different types of scaffolds, such as procedural, verbal and instructional. Also, bilingual translation will be used whenever it is possible. The teaching model used in the school is typically co-teaching. One of the teachers is an ESL teacher and the other is the classroom teacher. In this setting they typically asked probing questions together during mini lessons.



Question words are part of the basic vocabulary when learning English and they provide learners with important information in different topics related to different subjects. Level 1 English learners usually find them difficult to understand and therefore they need to know how

to use them correctly, either when they want to ask questions which require more information, or when they need to answer questions which have been formulated to them. These words are across all subjects at school and English learners will be encountering them and using them almost every day in different contexts. Therefore, it is important to help them understand their meaning and their correct use. Also, these words are part of the content in the standards of the of kindergarten and first grade in Language Arts. Hopefully, teachers will leave this workshop understanding the importance of scaffolding level 1 English learners to make the input comprehensible for them and managing scaffolding as a necessary tool to be included in the daily teaching practice.

The strategy that will be used in this lesson is scaffolding for level 1 English learners, using mainly the SIOP Model lesson plan. This model offers teachers a good example for lesson planning and implementation through different scaffolds, which provide English learners with access to grade-level content standards and language learning. In this lesson, some components of this model will be present, as well as different scaffolds for each activity. Some of these components and scaffolds are:

- Lesson preparation: Content and language objectives are clearly defined, displayed and orally reviewed with students.
- Building background knowledge: teacher helps students to connect past educational experiences with new ones and to connect new concepts to personal experiences by talking about the meaning of WH words and giving examples of these words.
- Comprehensible input: different scaffolds to help English learners understand the lesson's key concepts such as, language accommodation, teacher talk appropriate to students' English language development (ELD) level, repetition, paraphrasing, preview and review of important

information. Scaffolds provided in this lesson include demonstration and modeling of tasks, cooperative work, visual aids, charts and use of their first language whenever it is possible.

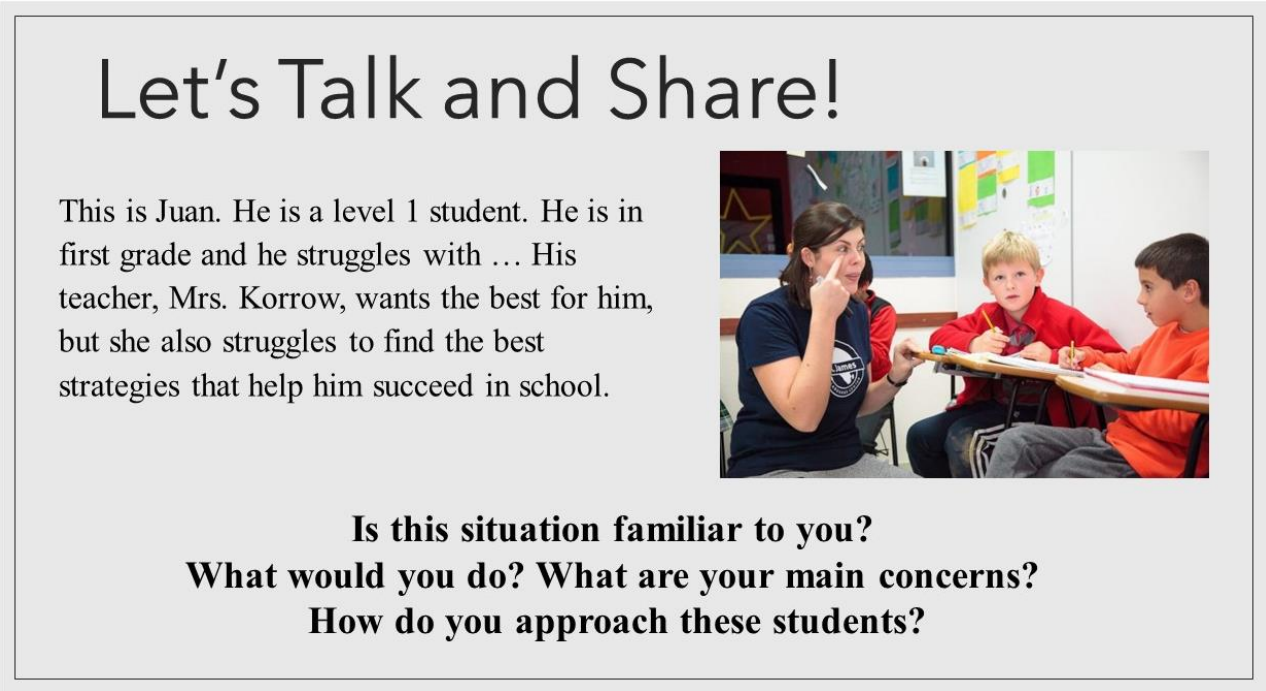
- Interaction: English learners are provided in this lesson with plenty of opportunities to talk and share their ideas in pairs or in the whole group. These activities are thought to put into practice academic vocabulary through interaction with others. In this way level 1 English learners feel safe and relax to participate in class because the affective filter is low.

- Practice and application: There are plenty of opportunities for ELLs to put into practice what they learned through hands on material and pair work, such as in the independent practice where students have the opportunity to work with a partner, or individually matching the WH words with pictures by themselves. The pictures and words will be given already cut, ready for them to complete the task.

- Lesson Delivery: Students know the content and Language objectives of the lesson, so the students know what they are going to learn and do. They can feel more motivated and engaged in the class because they have the opportunity to take responsibility of their learning.

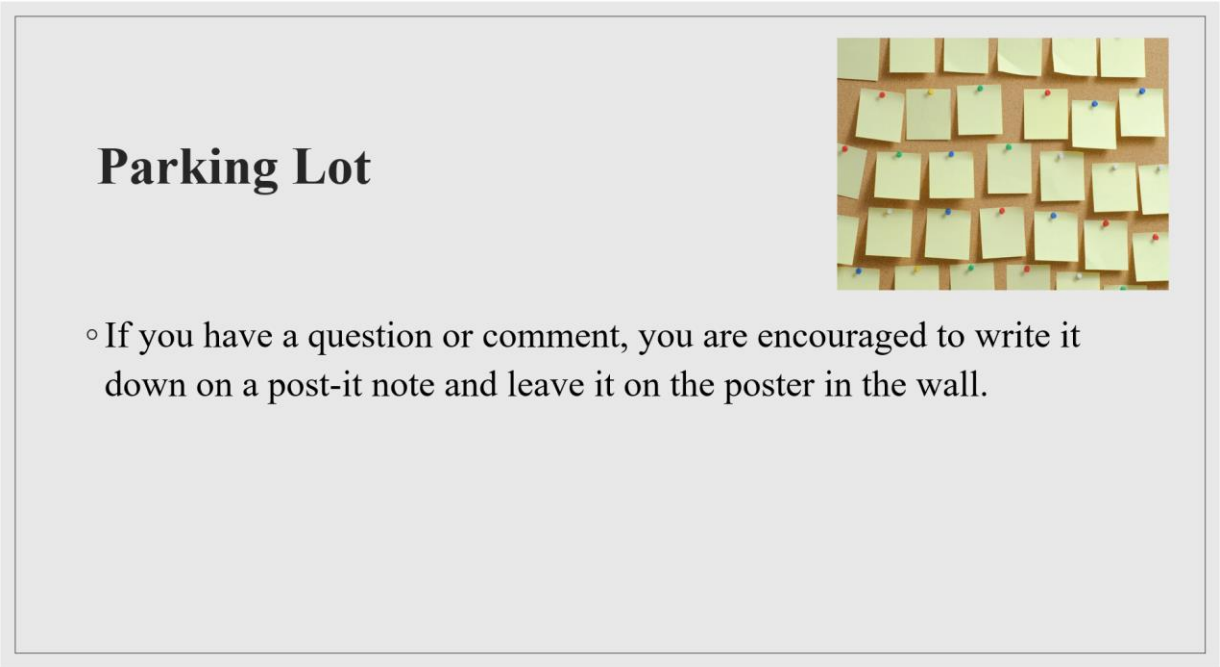
- The lesson allows time for review and assessment. For example, at the beginning of the lesson the teacher will ask for questions to review how much the students know about wh words. At the end of the lesson, the teacher will review key concepts.

Description of the audience

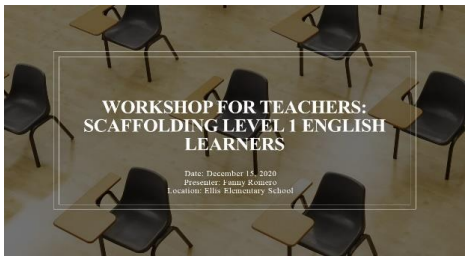


Classroom teachers from Kindergarten and first grade will participate in this workshop. The objective of this workshop is to broaden their knowledge of teaching level One English learners, by incorporating these scaffolds in different activities in their daily teaching practice. There are many new teachers who do not have enough experience working with ELLs, so this workshop may be a helpful resource to keep in mind when planning, but most importantly to put it into practice. At Ellis Elementary, instruction is typically provided in a bilingual setting during mini lessons. Because the student population is predominantly Latino (Hispanic), and many teachers also speak Spanish, it is important that teachers use the Spanish language to help them clarify new concepts whenever possible.

At the end of the workshop, teachers will be given the opportunity to ask questions, make comments or provide feedback on the activities presented.



Workshop



Let's Talk and Share!

This is Juan. He is a level 1 student. He is in first grade and he struggles with … His teacher, Mrs. Korrow, wants the best for him, but she also struggles to find the best strategies that help him succeed in school.

Is this situation familiar to you?
What would you do? What are your main concerns?
How do you approach these students?

Welcome, teachers!

- This workshop has been designed to help Kindergarten and First Grade teachers familiarize with scaffolding strategies than can be used when working with Level 1 English Learners.
- The workshop includes a scaffolded lesson plan where you will be participating as students.
- At the end of the workshop, you will be able to comprehend the importance of scaffolding for level 1 English learners and use scaffolding in your daily teaching practice.

- Classroom teachers have expressed their desire to broaden their knowledge of efficient strategies to teach level 1 English learners.
- There is a need to include some scaffolds in daily teaching practice to help level 1 students to success at the school.

Who am I? - My Expertise

- My name is Fanny Romero. I come from Chile.
- My first language is Spanish.
- I studied English language at Universidad Metropolitana de Chile.
- I got a TESOL Diploma at Oxford School of Languages in Melbourne, Australia.
- I have more than 10 years experience as an English Foreign Language teacher (EFL).
- I have 5 years of experience as an English Second Language teacher.
- Currently, I am studying to complete my Masters degree in TESOL at Greensboro College.

Lesson Plan Outline

- Subject: Language Arts
- Time:46 minute
- Class: Kindergarten/first grade
- Central focus of the lesson: Ask and answer questions using who, what, where, when, why
- Content Objective: Students will be able to recognize and use what, who, where, when, why
- Language Objective: Students will listen to a story and ask and answer question of the story using who, what, where, when, why.
- WIDA Goals

Language Domains attended to: Listening, reading, speaking and writing.
Key vocabulary: Question words/ who, what, where, when, why
Resources/ material
Assessment: Formative
Scaffolds provided: Instructional, verbal, procedural

Lesson Sequence:
1. Focus and Review
2. Lesson Statement
3 Teacher Input
4. Guided Practice
5. Independent Practice
6. Assessment methods
7. Closure

Reflection: Think and discuss with your elbow partner

What were the scaffolds used in this lesson?
- Can you explain them?
- Why or how should these scaffolds be used with English Language Learners?
- Are they useful/ easy to apply in your daily teaching practice?

Parking Lot

- If you have a question or comment, you are encouraged to write it down on a post-it note and leave it on the poster in the wall.

Lesson Plan

Subject: ESL/ Language Arts **Time:46'** **School: Ellis Elementary** **Grade: K-1st**	**Central focus of the lesson: Ask and answer questions using who, what, where, when, why**
Content Objectives: -Students will be able to listen to a story and answer the questions about the story. -Students will be able to recognize wh-question words. -Students will be able to ask questions using who, what, where, why, when -Students will be able to write questions using what, where, when, who, why.	Language Objectives: - Student listen to a story and answer questions with who, what, where, when, why in complete answers by using sentence frames and picture cards, orally and in writing. -Students match picture cards and wh words in pairs. -Students recognize and say wh question words by using picture cards. -Students (individually) listen and write wh words in their whiteboards.
WIDA Goals: Listening: Match objects, figures, or illustrations to words. Speaking: Answer **wh-**questions**.** Reading: Match words to pictures.	Language domain attended to: Listening, speaking, reading, writing

Writing: Make symbols, figures, or letters from models and realia.	
Key vocabulary: Question words/ who, what, where, when, why	Academic Language (Language Function and Vocabulary): Students ask and answer questions about a story using wh-question words. -Students identify and name different places in a story using where, when, what, who, why.
Prior Knowledge: Students will make connections between wh words and the meaning of them through picture cards. Students answer the question “what is to be a good reader”/ what do good readers do? Do good readers ask questions? Teacher gives examples like where-dónde/ who- quién o quiénes/ when- cuando/ what-que/ why-por qué	

Resources/material: visual aids/ flashcards/chart/ story book/ whiteboards, markers.	21st Century Skills: Critical thinking, problem solving, communication, initiative, self-direction.
Assessment: Formative: -Reading skill: while students work independently, teacher provides help when they need it and monitors their work. (students organize and match pictures and words, quick check) - Listening skill: Teacher Observations during Mini Lesson, thumbs up or down for oral questions - Speaking skill: ask students to share one thing they learned -Writing: Teacher check students' questions when they write on the whiteboard.	Types of support provided: Three scaffolds: verbal scaffold, use of think-alouds, paraphrasing ideas, correcting pronunciation, reinforcing definitions/ concepts. Procedural scaffold, explicit teaching, modeling, partnering students with more experienced ones. Instructional scaffold, graphic organizers, picture cards, whiteboards.

Lesson Sequence

Activity	Description of the activity	Time
1 Focus and review	-Teacher reads to students, content and language objectives; what they will learn and be able to do by the end of the lesson. - Teacher asks students What is a question? Translate (if needed) in Spanish all the wh words, provide examples like what is this? / what color is the table? / who is she? / why are you sad? / when do we go home? -Teacher shows the question words and picture cards they will practice (who, what, where, when, why) -Ask students to repeat the words after you when you point to them. See appendix # 1	5’
2- Statement of the lesson for students	Lesson statement: “Why do readers ask questions”.	5’
3- Teacher input	- Ask students to repeat wh-words (choral repetition). Then, ask them to read and point to the word they hear. (Flashcards)	5’

<table>
<tr><td></td><td><table><tr><td>What</td><td>Who</td><td>Where</td><td>When</td><td>Why</td></tr></table>
-Explain/translate the wh words in Spanish to clarify concepts, give examples, where does the story happen? Where do you have lunch every day?</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4- Guided practice</td><td>- Introduce a chart with the question words, model for students how to complete this chart by using think alouds and say the words out loud. Do a couple of examples, then ask students to do it with you.
Chart:
See appendix # 2</td><td>10’</td></tr>
<tr><td>5- Independent practice</td><td>-Ask students to complete their own charts with the picture cards they have in a bag. See Appendix # 3
-Check students’ work by asking questions individually and by checking their work while they are working.</td><td>10’</td></tr>
</table>

	-Once students finish their work, ask questions to make sure everybody understand the meaning of these question words. For example, what question word goes with…? (show a picture of a house, etc.)	
6- Assessment methods of all objectives/ skills	Assessment: Formative -Reading skill: while students work independently, teacher provides help when they need it and monitors their work. (students organize and match pictures and words, quick check) - Listening skill: Teacher Observations during Mini Lesson, thumbs up or down for oral questions - Speaking skill: ask students to share one thing they learned, or when students read their questions of the story.	During all the activities, the whole lesson.
7- Closure	- Writing skill: teacher reads a short story and asks students to write questions with wh-words in their whiteboards. Example, who are the characters in the story?	10’

	- Teacher reviews answers with the students, students take turns to answer, students give thumbs up or down, if they agree with the answer. - Teacher asks students to answer the question: Can you tell me the words we learned? Story: The three little pigs.	

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Learning a second language is a complex process that can be quite stressful and intimidating not only for language learners, but also for their teachers. In my experience as an English as a Second Language teacher in the United States, I have come across difficulties experienced by classroom teachers in the area of level 1 English learners. In becoming aware of this, I wanted to help provide a solution. I discovered that it is not necessarily that the educators within school systems do not have the knowledge to assist these students, but they often do not have the necessary experience to implement effective strategies, nor they do not know how to put these strategies into practice. Completing this research project helped me to gain a better understanding of the point of view of these classroom teachers and their struggles. This allowed me to better understand the connections between ESOL teachers and classroom teachers and the need for collaboration between the two if they wish for their level 1 English learners to succeed.

Classroom teachers who do not have enough experience or who have not been educated in teaching language learners may feel discouraged and unsure when they create their lesson plans and appropriate activities for level 1 English learners. This group of students needs a stress-free environment for learning and appropriate ways to scaffold their learning, so that their educational process can be successful. Classroom teachers have a key role in this matter, it is their responsibility to be able to create lesson plans and activities that allow level 1 English learners to grow and succeed in the acquisition of L2, as well as academic goals.

In my experience, many teachers do not have enough certainty on how to scaffold level 1 students. As a result, they do not provide students with what they need to succeed and both of

them continue to struggle. Classroom teachers are qualified in different subjects, yet they struggle in scaffolding techniques and adapting their lessons to the needs of level 1 learners because they do not have a knowledge base in second language acquisition. For this reason, I created a workshop, which has as its pillar a scaffolded lesson plan that could be used as a guide on how to scaffold for this group of students. Kindergarten and first grade teachers will receive a copy of the lesson plan in order to become familiar with the different ways to scaffold level 1 students following a model on how to do it. Also, throughout the school year, classroom teachers can refer to this lesson plan for examples on scaffolding to apply them in their daily teaching practices, or when creating their lessons and activities for the class.

Through the workshop outlined in the previous chapters, educators will gain knowledge and experience as they practice a lesson for themselves, as level 1 English learners. This workshop will allow the teachers to have a deeper understanding of the struggles of their level 1 English learners and how scaffolding will assist them to gain more academic presence in school. The focus of the lesson in the workshop is to develop an understanding of "question words". This is vital for level 1 students because these are words that are continuously used through multiple subjects, including science, language arts, and math. These words flow across all curricula and they help to generate considerations of fundamental concepts in learning for all grade levels.

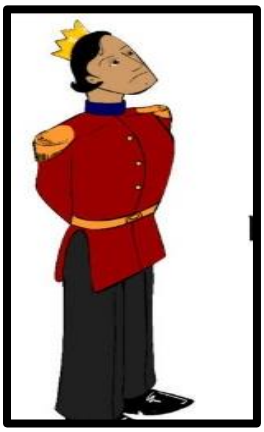
In completing this research and through creating this workshop, I uncovered that although the classroom teachers struggle with providing their students appropriate scaffolds for learning at times, this does not mean that they do not want their students to experience academic success. I discovered that in spite of the knowledge these classroom teachers may have, they struggle with putting it into practice. Even through this struggle, it is clear that the teachers at all

levels want the best for their students. Through attending the workshop outlined here, the teachers will have a better grasp of proper scaffolding implementation and perhaps a way to reach out in collaboration with their ESOL teaching counterparts. In conclusion, the importance of scaffolding for level 1 English learners is the foundation for them to acquire the knowledge needed to succeed at school and in all their future endeavors. Scaffolding is the fundamental pillar for these students to have access to the content knowledge and second language acquisition which will provide them with the ability to become productive citizens in a global society.

Appendices

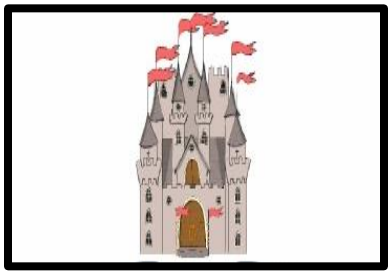
Appendix A: Picture cards and WH words

WHO



WHAT

WHERE



WHEN

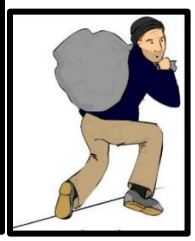
WHY

Appendix B: Chart with WH words and pictures.

WH words	Pictures
Who	
Where	
What	
When	
Why	

Appendix C: Bag with WH words and pictures.

What- Where-Who-When-Why



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